

FISH & WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Date: January 14, 2016

Agenda Item: Hunting Districts with Expanded Permit To Hunt From A Vehicle

Division: Wildlife

Action Needed: Proposed

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 15 Min

Background

FWP proposes to allow Permit to Hunt from a Vehicle holders to harvest antlerless elk in 44 hunting districts – 17 HDs in Region 2 and 27 in Region 3. The Region 2 districts are: 201-00, 204, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 240, 261, 262, 283, 291, 292, and 293. Region 3 HDs are: 300, 301, 302, 311, 317, 318, 319, 321, 328, 329, 331, 332, 334, 335, 339, 340, 341, 343, 350, 360, 361, 362, 370, 380, 388, 391, and 392. Other HDs were not considered because if current proposals before the Commission are adopted Regions 4, 5 and 7 will have antlerless opportunity for a general license holder in almost all hunting districts. Region 6 is a mixture of permit-only and general-license opportunities and HDs with general-license opportunities are already either-sex. Region 1 has lower densities of elk overall and consequently additional opportunities to harvest cows won't be offered.

In 2012, the Blackfoot Access Group supported FWP in suspending special privileges for PTHFV holders to hunt antlerless elk, due in part to elk declines on public lands in Region 2 and in part to loosened criteria (since 2001) for individuals to qualify for a PTHFV, which led to abuse of the hunting privilege. The Blackfoot Access Group worked in the 2013 legislative session to restore tighter criteria for issuing the PTHFV and the F&W Commission committed to revisiting the topic of allowing special privileges for PTHFV holders to harvest antlerless elk. FWP regional wildlife biologists considered elk population status and trends in every hunting district and predicted that the proposed PTHFV opportunity would not contribute to an overharvest in the districts identified above.

Public Involvement Process & Results

The Region 2 specific proposal was developed in active collaboration with the Blackfoot Access Group. The Region 3 portion of the proposal includes HDs that currently do not have a general antlerless opportunity but do offer a youth opportunity. In addition, this subject was discussed by the F&W Commission in December.

Alternatives and Analysis

No alternatives were analyzed.

Agency Recommendation & Rationale

FWP recommends that the Commission approve for public comment the proposal to allow PTHFV holders to harvest antlerless elk in the 44 hunting districts in Regions 2 and 3.

Proposed Motion

I move the Commission approve for public comment FWP's proposal to allow PTHFV holders to harvest antlerless elk in the 44 hunting districts in Regions 2 and 3.